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ILLINOIS THEATRE

CHICAGO, ILL.

OCTOBER 15, 1900.

CHICAGO TRIBUNE
MON. JANUARY 27th 1936.

EPOCH OF DRAMA TO BE REVEALED IN CORNER STONE

Records of Old Illinois Theater to Be Saved.

BY KAY HALL.

The theater of the past and the theater of the future will be discussed this week with the opening of the cornerstone of the Illinois theater, 61-65 East Jackson boulevard, which was laid on May 22, 1900. The building is being wrecked to make way for a parking lot.

When the corner stone is opened Harry J. Powers, who has been one of the owners of the playhouse since it was built, will carry the contents, including a box of historical papers and photographs and a bottle of Kentucky bourbon, to the Union League club. The papers and photographs will be offered to the Chicago Historical society, said Mr. Powers, but the whisky will be drunk at an informal luncheon in the club which will be attended by Mr. Powers and the other two liquidating trustees of the property, Martin F. Colby and R. A. Mowat.

Spans Rich Epoch of Drama.

The theater in its 35 years spanned a rich epoch of the American stage.

Its dedicatory performance on Oct. 15, 1900, was a civic occasion. Its stage was the largest of any legitimate theater at the time it was built and the auditorium seated 1,400 persons. Mr. Powers characterized it as "of classical architecture and rococo decorations, not the extreme gaudiness of de luxe music houses of today."

For the opening Charles Frohman presented Julia Marlowe in "Barbara Fritchie" with Katherine Wilson, Norah Lamison, Ellen Rowland, Bruce McRae, Charles Harbury, Donald MacLaren, C. F. Gibney and other notable players. James O'Donnell Bennett, for many years a TRIBUNE writer, was the business manager of the company.

Sarah Bernhardt played the theater many times, outstandingly in "L'Aiglon." "Toward the end she was very feeble and got around by pushing a chair, but her voice was as beautiful as ever," Mr. Powers recalled yesterday.

Long List of Famed Stars.

Famous stars from England who trod the Illinois boards included Henry Irving, Ellen Terry, Sir Herbert Tree, G. P. Huntley and the Lyceum theater company from London. "Ziegfeld's Follies" came regularly to the Jackson boulevard house.

The most spectacular offering was the first Chicago presentation of "Ben Hur" when real horses appeared on the stage on a treadmill for the chariot race. The stage had to be extended into the alley south of the building, Mr. Powers recalled.

"Green Pastures" in 1931 was the last play and its long run reflected some of the past glories of the Illinois stage. It was followed in 1932 by "The Band Wagon," the last major presentation and a sample of the current hilarity of musical comedy.

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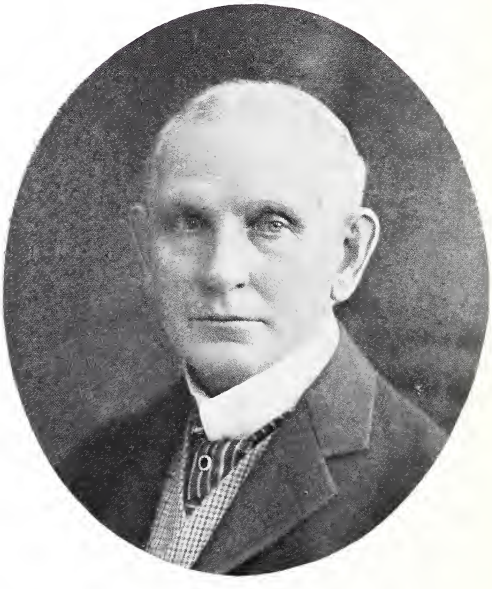


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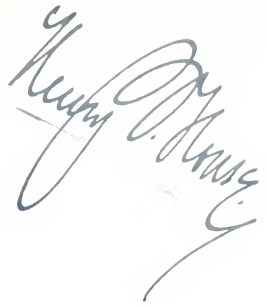
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AL HAYMAN



WILL J. DAVIS



THE ILLINOIS THEATRE

ABSOLUTELY FIRE PROOF

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
OCTOBER 15, 1900

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LIBRARY

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ILLINOIS THEATRE
Souvenir
Programme
DEDICATORY
PERFORMANCE
Charles Frohman Presents
JULIA MARLOWE
IN
"BARBARA FRIETCHIE"
An Original Play by Clyde Fitch
C.B. Dillingham Manager.
CHICAGO ILL'S.
Oct. 15th 1900.
ILLINOIS THEATRE
JACKSON BOULEVARD
CHICAGO.

71876

Rand, McNally & Co., Printers and Engravers, Chicago.

THE ILLINOIS THEATRE

ABSOLUTELY FIRE PROOF

Jackson Boulevard,
bet. Wabash and Michigan Avenues
Chicago, Ill.

HAYMAN & DAVIS COMPANY . . . . . PROPRIETORS
WILL J. DAVIS . . . . . MANAGER

NOTE—Associated in the Hayman-Davis Company are: Messrs. Al Hayman, Charles Frohman, Harry J. Powers, Klaw and Erlanger, and Will J. Davis.



THE BUSINESS AND WORKING STAFF OF THE THEATRE INCLUDES :: :: :: ::

HARRY G. SOMMERS . . . . Business Manager and Treasurer
T. J. Noonan . . . . . Assistant Treasurer
Helen Hagan . . . . . Secretary
William Moebius . . . . . Director of Music
Thomas Cleland . . . . . Electrician
Frank Bishop . . . . . Master Carpenter
J. E. Cummings . . . . . Master of Properties
John Rich . . . . . Engineer
Thomas W. Geary . . . . . Doorkeeper
Harry Neal . . . . . Chief Usher
Mrs. Lizzie Cleland . . . . . Janitress
Ada Wood . . . . . Ladies' Maid



THE CONSTRUCTION

OF THE ILLINOIS THEATRE

ABSOLUTELY FIRE PROOF

UNDER THE DIRECTION OF

WILSON & MARSHALL, ARCHITECTS

enlisted the efforts of the following Sub-Contractors,
all under the supervision of the General Contractors

THE GEORGE A. FULLER COMPANY

Steel	Carnegie Steel Company.
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Sheet metal	C. B. Rickert.
Plumbing	John Degnan.
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Electric fixtures	T. W. Wilmarth Company.
Decorations, furnishings, and carpets, ...	Marshall Field & Co.



ILLINOIS THEATRE.



JULIA MARLOWE

ILLINOIS THEATRE

JACKSON BOULEVARD, CHICAGO

HAYMAN & DAVIS CO., Proprietors WILL J. DAVIS, Manager

DEDICATORY PERFORMANCE

MONDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1900

JULIA MARLOWE

AS : : : **BARBARA FRIETCHIE**

THE FREDERICK GIRL

A NEW AND ORIGINAL PLAY IN FOUR ACTS, BY CLYDE FITCH

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Barbara Frietchie	Julia Marlowe
Sally Negley	Katherine Wilson
Sue Royce	Norah Lamison
Laura Royce	Ellen Rowland
Mrs. Hunter	Annie Clarke
Mammy Lu	Alice Leigh
Captain Trumbull	Bruce McRae
Mr. Frietchie	Charles Harbury
Arthur Frietchie	Donald MacLaren
Colonel Negley	C. F. Gibney
Jack Negley	E. W. Morrison
Fred Gelwix, Soldiers	Wilfred North
Tim Greene, Soldiers	Frederic Burt
Edgar Strong	Frederic Leslie
Dr. Hal Boyd	Frank Reicher
Sergeant James	J. J. Elwyn
Corporal Perkins	W. H. Taylor
Orderly	Frank Bernard
A Boy	Claire Kulp

Soldiers (Union and Confederate), Townspeople and Children

The author disclaims any intention to the writing of an historical play. He has endeavored merely to picture in an imaginary story some of the spirit and atmosphere of a certain period of our history, using the personality of "Barbara Frietchie" as best lending itself to his purpose.



BETWEEN

CHICAGO AND KANSAS CITY,
CHICAGO AND ST. LOUIS,
CHICAGO AND PEORIA,
ST. LOUIS AND KANSAS CITY.

THROUGH PULLMAN SERVICE BETWEEN CHICAGO AND

HOT SPRINGS, Ark., DENVER, Colo.,
TEXAS, FLORIDA, UTAH,
CALIFORNIA AND OREGON.

IF YOU ARE CONTEMPLATING A TRIP, ANY PORTION OF WHICH CAN BE MADE OVER THE CHICAGO & ALTON, IT WILL PAY YOU TO WRITE TO THE UNDERSIGNED FOR RATES, MAPS, TIME-TABLES, ETC.

GEO. J. CHARLTON,
GENERAL PASSENGER AGENT,
CHICAGO, ILL.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I.—A street in Frederick. After supper.
ACT II.—The Lutheran minister's house in Hagerstown. The following day.
ACT III.—The Frietchie house in Frederick. Two days later.
ACT IV.—SCENE 1—Barbara's room. The next morning.
SCENE 2—The street.

Ten minutes intermission between Acts I and II.
Fifteen minutes intermission between Acts II and III.
Fifteen minutes intermission between Acts III and IV.

The programme of music will include

Festival Overture . . . . . Leutner
Selection from "The Viceroy" . . . . . Herbert
Intermezzo and Nocturne . . . . . Mendelssohn
Moorish Suite . . . . . Vazar

THE ILLINOIS MARCH, composed expressly for this occasion, by Mr. Sol Bloom, will be played by the orchestra for the first time at the end of the performance.

Produced under the personal supervision of Clyde Fitch.
Staged by William Seymour.
The Scenery painted by E. G. Unitt.
The Music arranged and composed by Wm. Furst.
The Costumes designed by Virginia Gerson and made by Dazian.
The Bonnets made by E. H. Fielding & Co.

EXECUTIVE STAFF

James O'Donnell Bennett . . . . . Business Manager
L. J. Rodriguez . . . . . Acting Manager
Frank Colfax . . . . . Stage Manager
Sampson Gelder . . . . . Stage Carpenter
John Flam . . . . . Properties

The Julia Marlowe Souvenir Book, containing a collection of pictures representing Miss Marlowe in some of her most notable impersonations, can be had at the Box Office.

U OF I
LIBRARY

COMING ATTRACTIONS

During the season the management will have the pleasure of presenting the following attractions at The Illinois Theatre, the engagements not being herein named in regular sequence, however:

ANNA HELD
in "PAPA'S WIFE"

MISS MAUDE ADAMS
in "L'AIGLON"

ADA REHAN
in "SWEET NELL GWYNNE"

BERNHARDT-COQUELIN COMPANY

KLAW & ERLANGER'S
production of "BEN HUR"

ALICE NIELSEN OPERA COMPANY

ROGERS BROTHERS
in "CENTRAL PARK"

FRANCIS WILSON OPERA COMPANY
in "THE MONKS OF MALABAR"

THE AUGUSTIN DALY MUSICAL COMPANY
in the Chinese Operetta
"SAN TOY"

KLAW & ERLANGER'S OPERA COMPANY
in "FOXEY QUILLER"

Due notice will be given of other important engagements, negotiations for which are now pending.

The Illinois Theatre

THE ILLINOIS THEATRE is believed to typify the most beautiful, as well as the best, that the new century can offer in a home for the drama. Chicago, the youngest of the great cities of the world, possesses a score of modern playhouses, but this new structure not only incorporates the best architectural virtues of its predecessors, but possesses other advantages, embodying the latest and most approved features in theatrical construction. In a building imposing and monumental in design, isolated on all sides, the new Illinois Theatre insures security and luxurious comfort to the patron, and incorporates the most perfect of modern appliances for adequate stage representation. An integrity of purpose is in evidence in every department of the new structure. The theatre is a distinct addition to the architectural fame of Chicago.

Another feature of the new theatre worthy of remark is the fact that it was built by and for theatrical men. Every dollar expended in its creation was theatrical money, made in the theatrical business. Being thus created there is reason for its devotion to the single purpose of a theatre. Its sponsors are Al Hayman and Will J. Davis. Its stockholders, besides the two sponsors, are Charles Frohman, Harry J. Powers, and Messrs. Klaw and Erlanger, all well-known managers.

A few facts concerning the conception and erection of this



BENJAMIN H. MARSHALL.



ENTRANCE.

structure may be interesting, as the work was carried on under the most pronounced difficulties and brought to a successful conclusion in the face of the greatest building strike that has ever vexed Chicago. Plans looking to the erection of the new building were begun some time before the destruction of the Columbia Theatre, its legitimate predecessor. Messrs. Hayman and Davis had endeavored to secure a renewal of their lease of the Columbia, agreeing to rebuild it at a large expense, but all their advances were negatived, and in self-preservation they began to look about for a new house. In December, 1899, they secured from the Ludington estate, a long lease of the property known as the First Regiment Armory, on Jackson Boulevard, between Wabash and Michigan avenues, the most desirable site obtainable in the central part of the city for a theatrical structure under the new building ordinances. In the middle of December they took possession of this property and instructed Wilson and Marshall, their architects, to raze the stone building standing on the site, and prepare plans and sketches for the new structure. On January 12th, Benjamin Marshall sent the sealed box of the old corner stone to Mr. Davis, who opened the relic in the presence of, and gave contents to, Colonel Sanborn and Lt.-Col. Frank O. Lowden of the First Regiment. On February 13th the contract for the construction of the new building was let to the George A. Fuller Company, and excavations were started soon afterward. The work progressed smoothly enough until the call for the mason work. There was at this time declared a general strike and lockout, the beginning of the most extensive building strike ever known in local history. After long consultations between Messrs. Hayman and Davis, and the architects and contractors, it was decided to construct the building with union labor in order to avoid obvious difficulties. The material men refused to sell to the Fuller Company. Fortunately there was enough stone in the old Armory building to construct the necessary foundations, as the footings are of steel. All of the tile work for chimneys, boilers, etc., was delivered at the

building in the dawn of the morning, so that the source of supply could not be ascertained. When it came to the theatre front, local dealers refused to sell stone. Measurements were sent to out-of-town contractors, and one was finally secured in a small Wisconsin town, and a dealer agreed to fill the order; but when he found out who it was for, he refused. Mr. Marshall and Mr. Merriman of the Fuller Company fortuitously went down the Chicago River one day on a tour of observation and discovered a pile of Buena Vista stone at the foot of Twenty-fifth Street. The Fuller Company leased the yard, purchased the stone, and built the front themselves. This species of trouble was experienced in almost every branch as the work progressed, and frequently it had to be taken away from the contractor and paid for direct by the owners. The unions apparently used the theatre building for a hammer, and in no way endeavored to help the architects or builders. Notwithstanding these troubles, the corner stone of the new building was laid May 22, 1900. It contains copies of the daily papers, the programs of different theatres, photographs of interested parties, and a pint of distilled Kentucky "sunshine," furnished by the Wellington. Who would not be here, say an hundred years hence, when this corner stone is opened? From this time, in spite of many obstacles, work progressed so favorably that the theatre was ready to open on schedule time.

The Illinois Theatre is the first monumental structure of the kind in America, the entire building being devoted to theatrical purposes only, there being no renting space.

The exterior of the building is in French style, and on simple classic lines. The front is of Buena Vista stone, with fine old copper work used sparsely in ornamentation and electroliers. The eaves of the building have projections handsomely carved, and the surmounting roof is of Spanish tile. The decoration is richly and judiciously applied, and the façade impresses by its beauty and dignity. The general architectural style may be classed as French Renaissance.



Across the front of the house is a canopy, or marquee, forty feet in width, accommodating three carriages at once. This is an elaborate bit of metal and glass decoration that adds attractively to the front of the building.

FOYER.

Here will be observed that generous attention has been bestowed upon the entrances to the house, which are notably spacious, there being fourteen doors given to an open space of at least thirty-five feet, for entrance to and exit from the theatre. There is no play-house in the country like it, there being in the aggregate forty-six exits from the auditorium. As before remarked, this theatre stands alone on an open space, with twelve feet intervening on the west, ten feet on the south, and on the east eighteen feet, with its most accommodating frontage on Jackson Boulevard.

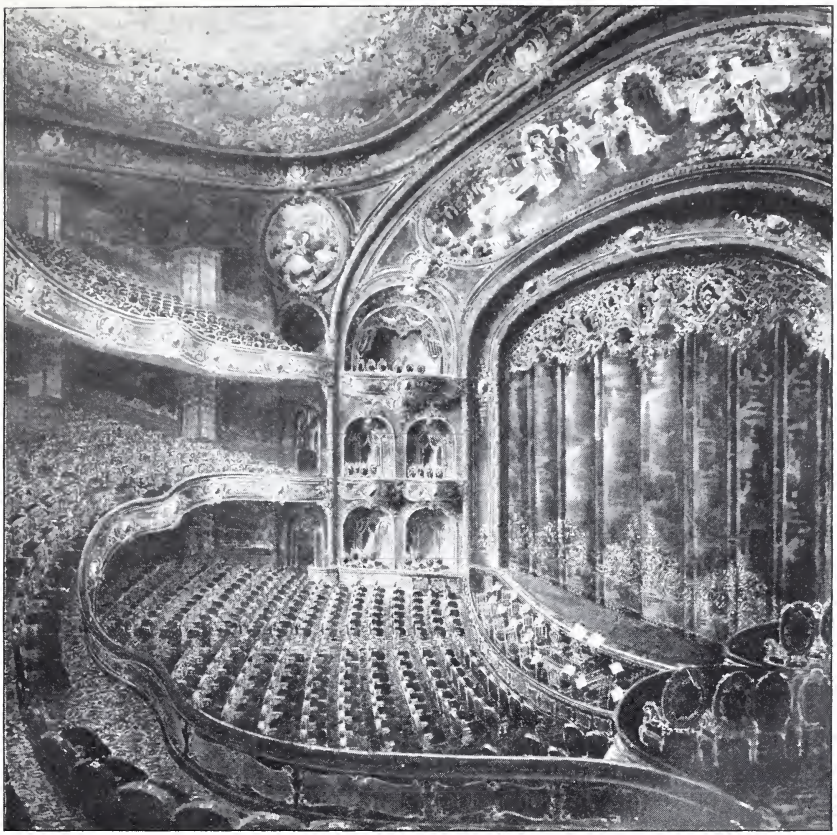
The lobby is forty-two feet wide and thirty feet deep. It is carried in an elaborate French style of architecture, with twin grand stairways leading to and from the balcony. The walls are of rubio marble, elaborately inlaid with turquoise-blue mosaic. The ceiling is thirty-five feet high, decorated in sky tints that give it an appearance of much greater height. The main ticket office is to the right of the lobby, with an emergency office for important advance sales directly opposite and on the left of the lobby. Both offices are alike in design.

The spacious lobby — lofty, airy, and inviting — leads directly to the fine foyer, with its ample promenade.

On entering the foyer one goes to the left for the ladies' parlor, check, and toilet room, so arranged with exits that visitors can get their wraps and reach the boulevard by a special exit without mingling with the crowds in the lobby. To the right of the foyer a stairway leads to the basement, where there is a gentlemen's smoking room, fitted up in Flemish style. Adjoining this is a buffet, finished up like an old log cabin, a reminder of early Illinois.

The dress circle is reached by grand staircases rising from the foyer on both sides, and is so arranged that after the performance the patrons can reach the street direct without being detained by the people passing from the main floor. This foyer is twelve feet wide and seventy feet long, the decorations thoroughly French, the ceiling being handsomely groined.

The lighting of the theatre has been installed with all precautions for safety, and all exterior lights in the auditorium have been cunningly masked so that there will be no glare in the eyes of the audience. The heating and ventilation of the auditorium have been cared for in the most scientific way, with every device for safety and comfort. The entire chamber beneath the auditorium is a vast repository for heat or cold as the season may necessitate. The air is thoroughly washed before it is admitted to this apartment, driven over steam coils, or cooling coils, coming through the floors in minute ducts and carried out through the top of the theatre by huge suction fans.



AUDITORIUM OF NEW ILLINOIS THEATRE.

The house is entirely fireproof, and the only wood used in the structure is in the floors. The aisles are much wider than is called for by the building ordinance of the city, are straight and, on the main floor, without steps, and there is ample room between the seats. All the seats on the first floor and in the dress circle are upholstered in red tapestry, with French figure center piece. The carpet and draperies are of electric red, the draperies being of silk plush with heavy gold fringes.

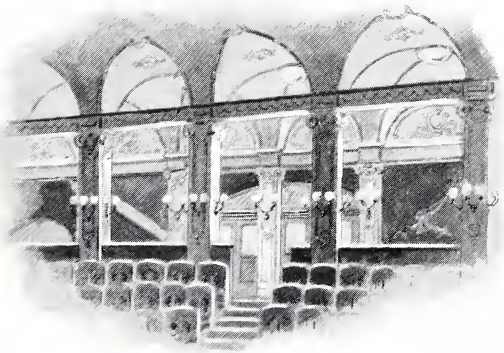
The interior decoration of the auditorium is all carried in the Louis XIV period, and the body tone of the decoration is of American beauty-rose color. The ornate front of the balconies, the boxes and the proscenium are in cream, with architectural form and decorative detail wrought in gold. This scheme of decoration is exceedingly rich and carried out with becoming taste. There are six boxes on the lower floor, four with a capacity for six persons, the

other two three each. There are four dress-circle boxes, surmounted by two large balcony boxes. The drop-curtain is in admirable harmony with the decorative design of the house. It is silk velour, with a French gold fringe border, the only decoration being the coat of arms of the State of Illinois embroidered as a center piece upon the rich fabric. Besides this curtain there is an asbestos drop, adorned with an attractive landscape, painted by St. John Lewis.

The most conspicuous feature of the decoration is an allegorical painting in the upper proscenium arch. It is a study by Gustave A. Brand, and represents the Spirit of Poetry holding "the mirror up to nature." Here are also a medallion of Shakespeare, with a genii placing a laurel wreath over the portrait; masks of tragedy and comedy; a youthful god of love and a pair of cooing doves. This figure is flanked on either side with group studies, that on the right representing drama and art, no less than eight separate figures being represented in the group. The left group represents a study of music. The background on the right of the painting is a shadowy remembrance of the World's Fair Court of Honor, while on the left is a rich garden profuse in gay-colored foliage. The tone color of the entire painting is in harmony with that of the auditorium and a magnificent complement to it.

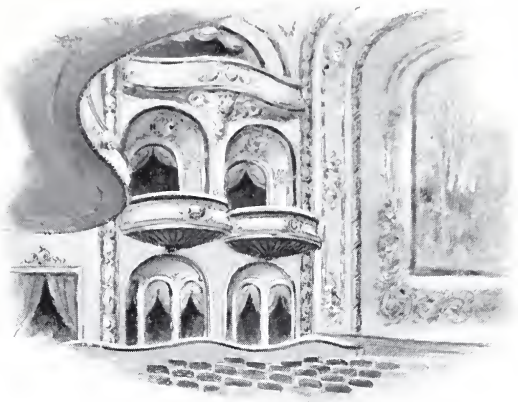
The seating capacity of the new theatre approximates 1,400, and is divided into orchestra (the entire first floor), dress circle (the entire second floor), and balcony (entire upper floor).

Access to the balcony of the theatre is by a succession of easy flights of stairs, the entrance to which is the extreme right door of the theatre front. Another feature of this upper floor is an assembly room, which occupies the space directly above the theatre vestibule. This assembly room is well lighted and commodiously furnished, and will furnish good opportunities for musicales and rehearsals. Adjoining this on the east is the private office of Manager Davis, beneath which and on the dress-circle floor is the business office of the theatre.



VIEW LOOKING TOWARD FOYER.

The stage of this house is quite as complete as the other portions, and is carefully supplied with conveniences for the actress and actor. The stage proper is forty-six



BOXES.

feet deep, seventy feet wide, and eighty-four feet to the gridiron. It is absolutely clear, built of iron, tile, and brick, and will permit the handling of the largest productions. The stage floor is in sections, carried upon jacks, so that any part can be removed without the usual disfigurements necessitated by "cuts." There are two dressing rooms on the stage, and a series of dressing rooms extend below the stage toward the front of the house. There are a dozen on each side of the building, completely equipped with hot and cold water, with two large supernumerary rooms similarly equipped. The toilet and ventilating arrangements are excellent throughout, and everything behind the scenes is as neat and trim as a ship's deck. The room below the stage is entirely clear, and has a large orchestra room in front. All the steam and heating plant is under the alley outside the building.

The fireproof asbestos curtain of the theatre is illuminated with a study by Mr. St. John Lewis, the celebrated scenic artist, with whose work Chicago is already familiar. But Mr. Lewis excels himself in this effort. The study is of a rural scene on the line of the Chicago & Alton Railway, in northern central Illinois. In color, sentiment, and feeling it is a veritable picture. A quatrain by James Whitcomb Riley, the Hoosier poet, epitomizes the scene:

> — "O Dreamer of the Days,
> Murmurer of Roundelays,
> All unsung of words or books,
> Sing green fields and running brooks."

This bit of poetry was selected by Miss Julia Marlowe and wired to Mr. Davis in response to an inspection of a water color made by Mr. Lewis and suggestive of the study he had made for the curtain.

No description of The Illinois would be complete without a tribute to the skill, perseverance, and untiring energy of its architects, Messrs. Wilson and Marshall. To Benj. H. Marshall, particularly, the work has been a labor of love. His interest in the enterprise began with the consideration of the site, as he was fortunately in possession of information which enabled him to bring

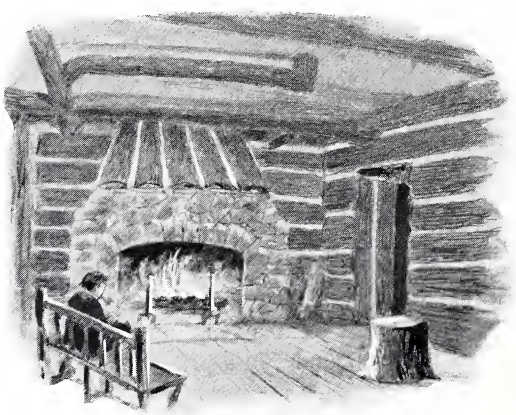
the representatives of the Ludington estate and the sponsors of the theatre together, to the end that Chicago now boasts of the most magnificent theatre in the world. Mr. Marshall was assigned to immediate control of the work. Not a working day has passed since the foundations were completed that he has not given a liberal portion of his time to the theatre, and since the detail of its finishing began he has given it his exclusive attention.

Mr. Marshall is all Chicago. Scarcely twenty-six years of age, he was born, reared, and educated here. He began his career as an architect without a course of special study, is largely self-taught, and therefore practical. The Illinois is the first theatre designed by Mr. Marshall, although the firm had charge of the reconstruction of Powers'. The two houses reflect his undoubted genius, and the projectors and owners of The Illinois gladly testify to its materialization

The study is his own in nearly every particular, including decorations, furnishings, and fittings. When some local Crœsus concludes to give Chicago the model opera house of the world, apparently an artistic necessity, the architects of the model theatre of America will be ready to perform the task.

* * *

The George A. Fuller Company is known by its works. Any number of buildings testify the superiority of this firm. The grandeur of Chicago is their glory, and The Illinois Theatre is considered both a model in construction and a veritable gem as a monumental building.



SMOKING ROOM.

NEW YORK
137 Broadway
BALTIMORE
Atlantic Trust Building

BOSTON
Brazer Building
ST. LOUIS
Fullerton Building

George A. Fuller Company

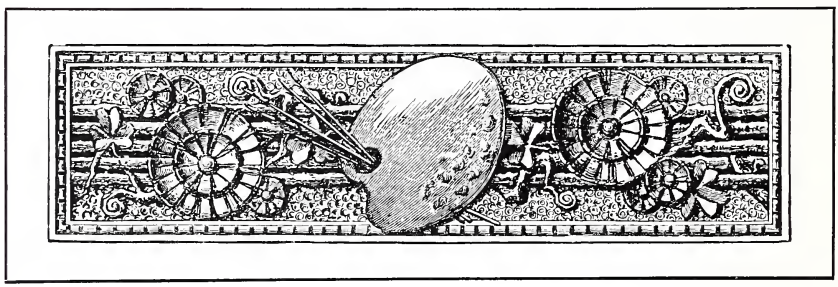
BUILDING CONSTRUCTION

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2719

Epitome of Chicago's Theatrical History

BY CHARLES E. NIXON.

IN ASSOCIATION with the opening of the new theatre something dramatically historical, both as regards theatres themselves and the earlier performances therein, appears appropriate.

Chicago as a municipality has as yet not attained the dignity of three score and ten, so her theatrical life can readily be compassed in the recollection of men who still live here. The destruction of all data relating to the theatre in the great fire of 1871 naturally leaves Thespian history with many blanks that have been filled inaccurately and intermittently.

By virtue of the restrictions contained in the city charter of 1837, persons were obliged to obtain a license for giving entertainments, and pay for the privilege of the franchise to the city council. The first application of this kind was made May 29, 1837, by Dean & McKinley, of the Eagle Street Theatre, Buffalo, N. Y., who asked for a permit "to open a theatre in some suitable building for a term of one or more months, as the business might warrant." The second on the list of applications was Clark S. Brown, who asked for license "to erect a show of flying horses for amusement and exercise to all." The third petition was from George Sigsby, but his plea was not granted, the council declaring that "no immorality shall be permitted." The wonder is what did Sigsby ask for? October 17, 1837, Isherwood & McKenzie turned the banquet hall of the historic Sauganash Hotel into a Thespian temple.

A letter from Isherwood to the late J. H. McVicker, written in 1883, details some of his experiences in connection with this venture:

"In 1837 I arrived in Chicago at night and was driven to a hotel in the pelting rain. The next morning we went out to take a view of the place. There was a plank walk in front of the building, and to my astonishment I saw a flock of quail on the plank. I returned to the hotel disappointed at what I saw of the town, and made up my mind that this was no place for a show. I told my landlord of my intention to return, and he gave me such a glowing account of what our success



ANNA HELD

First Musical Attraction in The Illinois

would be that he induced me to remain. At length some one hit upon a place that would do. It had been a rough tavern, with an extension of fifty feet in length added to it, and stood at some distance out on the prairie, solitary and alone. I arranged with the owner, and painted some pretty scenes. I then wrote to Mr. McKenzie, and he came from Buffalo with the company. It consisted of Messrs. Sankey, Childs, Wright, and others. A young Irishman who made one of the party became very unruly, and I was obliged to dismiss him. He said, 'Where shall I go, with Lake Michigan roaring on one side and the bloody prairie wolves on the other?' I can only remember one play, 'The Stranger.' When the season was concluded we took to the prairies, visiting the towns in the interior. Returning in the spring to Chicago, we fitted up a new place. It was on a street leading to the bridge. Joseph Jefferson and his wife, with young Joe, joined us there. All else is near oblivion. I must conclude this rambling epistle by saying with King Lear, 'You do me wrong to take me from the grave.' I am eighty years of age.

"H. Isherwood."

For some eight years, from 1839 to 1847, the drama languished in this frontier city. This depression has been variously accounted for. Some say that owing to the smallness of the population, Chicago had a surfeit of theatricals, and attributed the depression succeeding 1839 to the reaction that invariably succeeds a surfeit. Mr. McVicker, however, who has chronicled the early theatrical history, attributes this inactivity to the debilitated state of the country, brought about by the panic of 1837. He writes:

"My experience, and I have seen some panics, is that while amusements feel some depression, they do not feel any depressing effect at first. It comes by degrees and is slow in leaving. It is a mistaken idea that people seek theatres when depressed, but it is a correct one that panics strike the first hard blow at a few interests, and in time the entire body politic is permeated with the disease. Hence amusements are the last to feel the blow, and the last to recover from it, receiving their full share of its weight. Trifling and low amusements thrive best in times of general depression, for the reason that they are patronized by the unthinking classes who never economize."

The first playhouse, in the old caravansary, had rude wooden seats and accommodated about 200 persons. The floor was, of course, a dead level. There was no gallery and the ceiling was low and smoky. The second theatre, known as the Rialto, was a rude frame building on the west side of Dearborn Street, Nos. 8 and 10. This temple of the drama was about thirty feet by eighty in size. Benjamin F. Taylor, the poet, contemptuously described it "as a den of a place, looking more like a dismantled grist mill than a temple of anybody. The gloomy entrance would have furnished the scenery for a nightmare. The lights within were sepulchral enough to show up the coffin scene in 'Lucretia Borgia.' But for all that, those dingy old walls used to ring sometimes with renderings fine enough to grace grander Thespian temples, though there was a farce now and then somewhat broader than it was long."

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Joseph Jefferson chronicled his memories of this house briefly as follows:

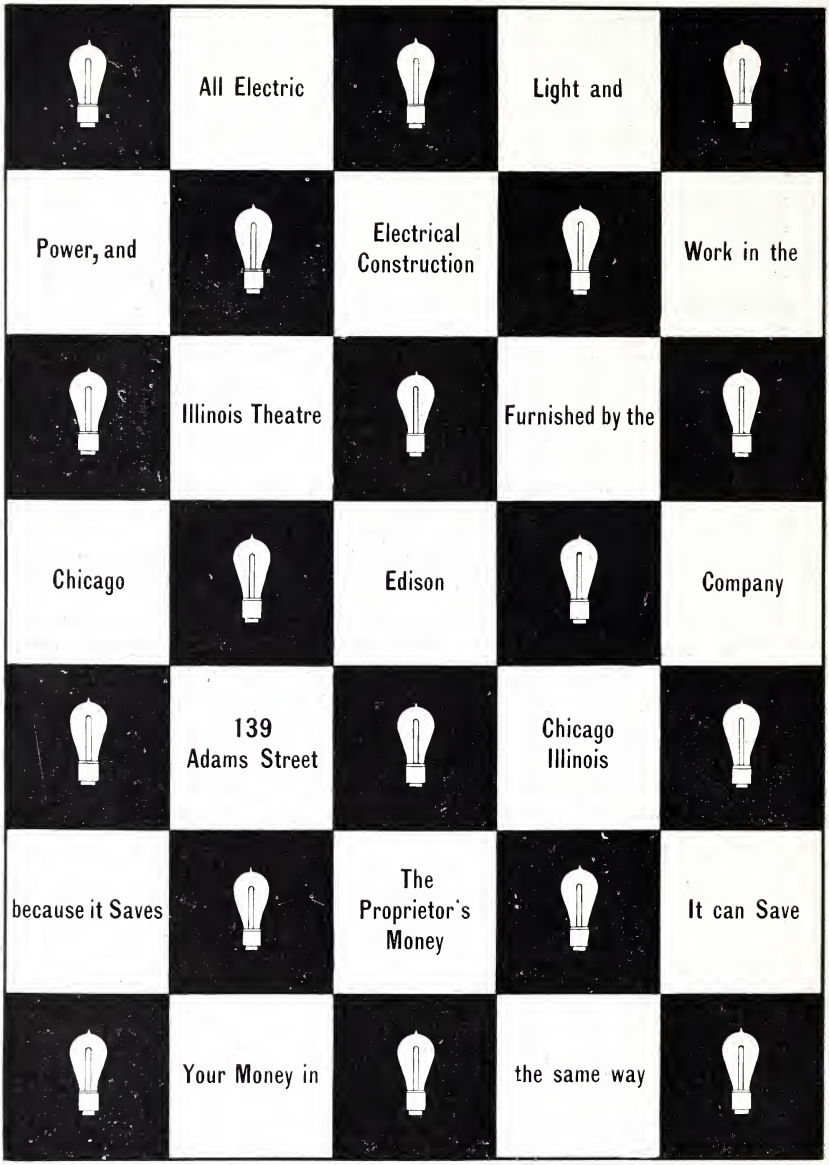
"My father and his family arrived in Chicago by way of the lakes, in a steamer, somewhere about May in the year 1838. He came to join Alexander McKenzie, my uncle, in the management of the new theatre. I think the new theatre was an old one refitted. I know it was quite the pride of the city and the idol of the new managers, for it had one tier of boxes and a gallery at the back. I don't think that the seats of the dress circle were stuffed, but I am sure they were planed. I was the comic singer of the party, making myself useful in small parts and first villagers; now and then doing duty as a Roman senator at the back, wrapped in a clean hotel sheet, with my head peering over profiled banquet tables. I was just nine years old. I was found useful as Albert and Duke of York. In those days the audience used to throw money upon the stage, either for comic songs or for dances, and oh, how I used to lengthen out the verses! The stars during the season were Mrs. McClure, Dan Marble, and A. A. Adams. Some of the plays acted were "Lady of Lyons," "Stranger," "Rob Roy," "Damon and Pythias," "Wives as They Were, Maids as They Are," and "Sam Patch." The city at that time had about three to four thousand inhabitants. I can remember following my father along the shore when he went shooting on what is now Michigan Avenue."

On August 30, 1842, Dan Marble opened an engagement, with Mrs. Sillsbee as leading lady, presenting "Black-Eyed Susan" and "Forest Rose." The season was a brief one. The *American*, the popular paper of the day, observed "that a considerable portion of our community will not countenance the theatre, no matter how talented its members." A description of the audience says:

"There was a small handful of half-breeds, a sprinkling of lieutenants from the army, and one or two worn-out paymasters. The pit was full of sailors, with occasionally a wharf rat. Even the always conscious dress circle flickered with any number of white cambric mops, and when the play took the right turn at last, the 'gods' applauded until the spiders swung in their webs, and the mice in the walls were whist. Even the chaps that spent their time in the interludes (boots and soup) eating peanuts, mopped out the corner of their eyes with their dirty knuckles, and had the theatrical management furnished soap as well as sorrow some of them might have put a better face on the matter."

In the fall of 1842 a theatre was opened in what was known as the Chapman Building, on the southwest corner of Fifth Avenue and Randolph Street. This house was pronounced to be a flourishing one, stocked with new and splendid scenery. The next year John S. Potter, of Louisville and Cincinnati theatrical fame, came to Chicago and secured a theatre that he promised to conduct "respectably."

In 1845 the Commercial Building, 73 Lake Street, was converted into a museum by Henry Fuller, surnamed "Gassy." He conducted an entertainment "in strict accordance with propriety, morality, and religion," for the ridiculously small charge of twenty-five cents, considering the "accordances." Amusements were also



CHICAGO EDISON COMPANY

given at this time in the City Saloon, which was chiefly devoted to concerts; Market Hall, where a variety of entertainment was given, such as minstrels, ventriloquists, instrumental and vocal concerts. The name of Frank Lumbard, who is still well-known, appears in these concert programs.

THE REAL BEGINNING.

The real beginning of theatrical history in Chicago is generally reckoned from June 28, 1847, when the late John B. Rice dedicated a theatre bearing his name. It was a frame building, and was located on the south side of Randolph Street between Dearborn and State. Mrs. Rice, coming from Buffalo, joined him at this point, and they appeared for the first time together on May 12, in "Romeo and Juliet." Thus was the legitimate drama introduced here in a suitable building formally dedicated for that purpose. The old theatre that had immediately preceded this was known as Al Chapin's, and was located on Dearborn Street between Lake and South Water streets. At the time of Mr. Rice's beginning, Chicago had a population of nearly 17,000 people, and was putting on city airs. The theatre soon became an attractive resort of such people of fashion as the city boasted and the "million." The first year was given over to the stock. The following winter was particularly rich in attractions, among them: Dan Marble, the late Mrs. John Drew, James Murdoch, Eliza Logan, Julia Dean, Barney Williams, and others. After three years' experience with the drama, opera was essayed, and July 28th "La Somnambula" was presented, the cast embracing Eliza Brienti, Miss Matthews, Mr. Manvers, and Mr. Dubreill. On the second night of the opera the house was reduced to ashes. The "loss was stated as $4,000; insurance $2,000."

On February 3, 1851, Mr. Rice opened his second theatre, which was built of brick, at a cost of $11,000, and occupied a site on Dearborn Street between Randolph and Washington, on the site of the present Unity Building. This structure had a frontage of eighty feet, was considered very remarkable, incorporating improvements and marking a new era for the drama of that day. At that time the pit occupied the space at present given the parquet, and was frequently the scene of disorders that terrified the peaceful. Even in Rice's first theatre, the pit was so great a menace that it was regularly stated in the advertisements: "A competent police force will be in attendance." The manager concluded it might be to his interest to abolish the pit and build a gallery about the top of his

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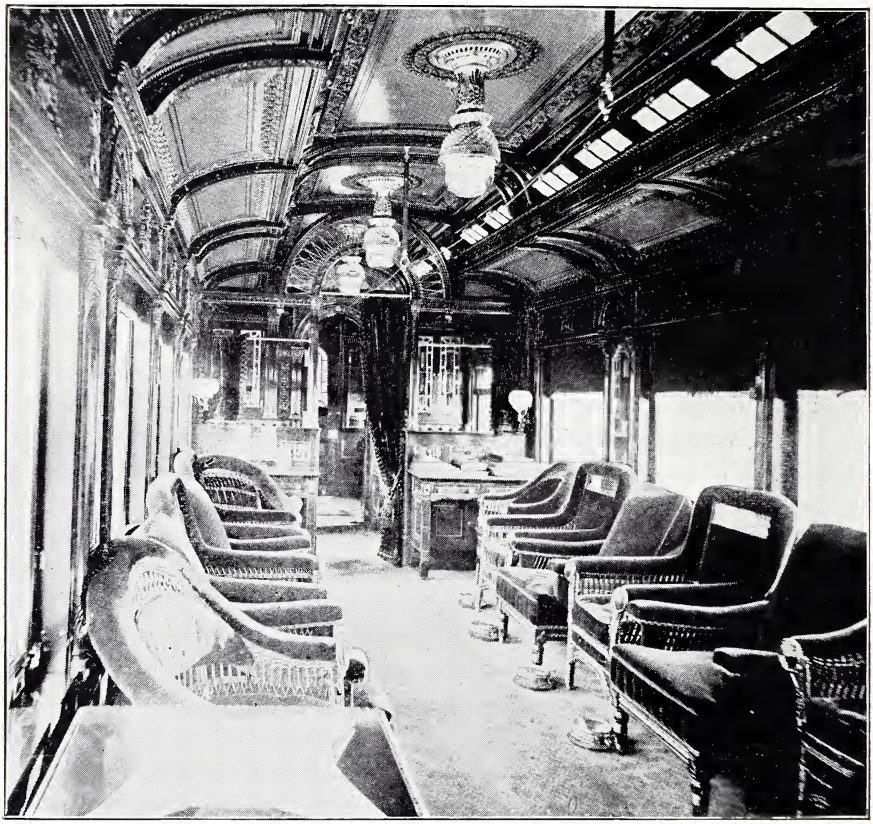
THE WELLINGTON HOTEL

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house for the second-class seats. Hence the parquet. This one change in theatre construction did more to popularize the playhouse among refined people than anything that had previously been attempted in theatrical construction. From this time forward the theatre in Chicago became an artistic, social, and financial success. The opening attraction of Rice's second theatre was a triple bill, "Love in Humble Life," "Captain of the Watch," and "The Dumb Belle." The stock company appeared upon the stage before the regular performance and joined with the audience in singing "The Star Spangled Banner." Mr. and Mrs. McVicker appeared in the bill and Mrs. John Gilbert, now favorably known as an admirable exponent of old ladies, danced a redowa between the plays. In November, 1851, Mr. Rice had a benefit, and William Warren came from Boston to assist. A little later Julia Dean made her first appearance in this theatre as "The Lady of Lyons." John Dillon, "recently graduated from a New York concert saloon," made his début in comedy rôles.

Among the early events notable in local amusement annals were: The first appearance of Julia Dean at Rice's Theatre, October 6, 1847; January 19, 1847, concert by Dempster at City Saloon; February 21, 1848, Herr Bartholomew appeared as the "Fire King"; May 9th, Mr. and Mrs. John Green and Mr. and Mrs. McVicker made their first appearance with the Rice Company; June 5th, Tom Thumb appeared at the Court House; June 15th, Edwin Forrest appeared at Rice's Theatre in "Jack Cade," concluding his engagement the 24th in "Lear." On June 28th, James E. Murdoch was a beneficiary, with "Richelieu" as the bill. November 20th, the Museum passed into the hands of David Kennison, who had attained the ripe old age of 112 years, and was a survivor of the Boston Tea Party. April 16th, spring season of the theatre commenced with "Widow's Victim," showing a new drop curtain labeled "Byron's Dream." On the 30th the Mont-Plaisser ballet gave a week of pantomime at the theatre. On the 15th, Mr. Buckley of New York presented the novelty of a "Drummond Light" at the Museum. On the 29th the Hoosier Minstrels opened at that house. The following two months were filled with benefits for the various members of the stock company. On December 3, 1849, a German theatre was established at Rio Grande Hotel. Almost every night in January and February of this year was given up to concert. April 17th, the theatre opened for the season, with Murdoch and McVicker in leading rôles. On May 4th, "Panorama of a Whaling Voyage" was presented. July 2d, Mr. and Mrs. Barney Williams appeared at the theatre.

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North's amphitheatre on Monroe Street, near Wells, was opened in 1856, with a stock company, including Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Thorne, J. H. Wallack, and others. Maggie Mitchell, William E. Burton, and Dion Boucicault, the comedian, appeared at this house during the next three years. Mr. North presented a novel entertainment in that he gave a ring performance (circus) every night prior to the drama. Ben Jennings, afterward a noted local publican, was the clown. The stage was built on wheels and was run over the circus ring fully equipped for the play. This house, which subsequently was known as the National Theatre, had a troubled career until 1864, when it was demolished to make way for a business block. November 17th of this year marked the opening of Yankee Robinson's Athenæum by a stock company, embracing Charlotte Crampton, Yankee Miller, Yankee Robinson, Laura Lee, F. A. Tannehill, Mrs. F. A. Tannehill, W. Davis, C. F. Lester, and others. The opening bill was "Fazio" and "Jacobite." This year marked the last of a series of afternoon concerts, and the Chicago Musical Union was organized early in January.

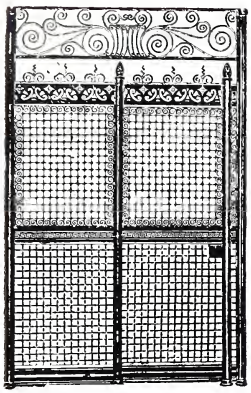
HISTORIC McVICKERS.

The late James H. McVicker erected his first theatre upon the site that has ever since been identified with his name, in 1857, at a cost of $85,000, opening it November 5th, by a stock company, in "The Honeymoon" and "The Rough Diamond." In the following May, Edwin Booth first appeared here, playing "A New Way to Pay Old Debts," "Richelieu," "Brutus," and Shakesperean repertoire. The elder Sothern appeared here in 1861, J. H. Hackett in 1863, Lotta in 1864, Charles Kean in 1865, Mrs. Siddons in 1869, and other noted actors of the time. The theatre was remodeled in 1864 and rebuilt in 1871, and had only been running a few months when it was destroyed by the great fire. Mr. McVicker again rebuilt his house at a cost of $200,000, opening it August 15, 1872, with "Time Works Wonders." The theatre was remodeled in 1885, at a cost of $145,000, and on August 26, 1890, it was destroyed by fire. Mr. McVicker, with characteristic Chicago enterprise, promptly rebuilt his theatre, reopening it March 31, 1892, with the Jefferson-Florence Company in "The Rivals." The great foreign actors who visited America have appeared on this historic stage, with few exceptions.

Colonel Kingsbury opened a hall on Randolph Street in 1862. It subsequently became Wood's Museum, and afterward was known as Aiken's Theatre. The house was dedicated by the Holman

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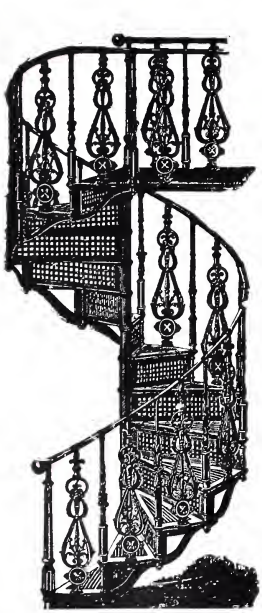
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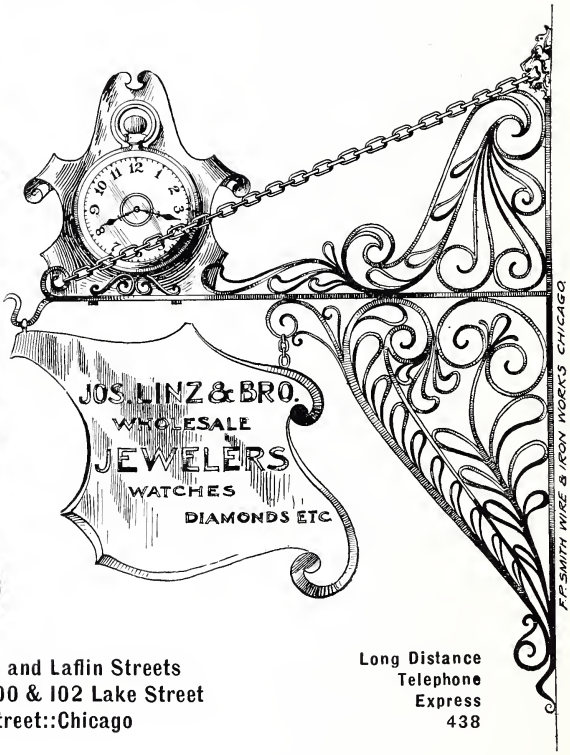
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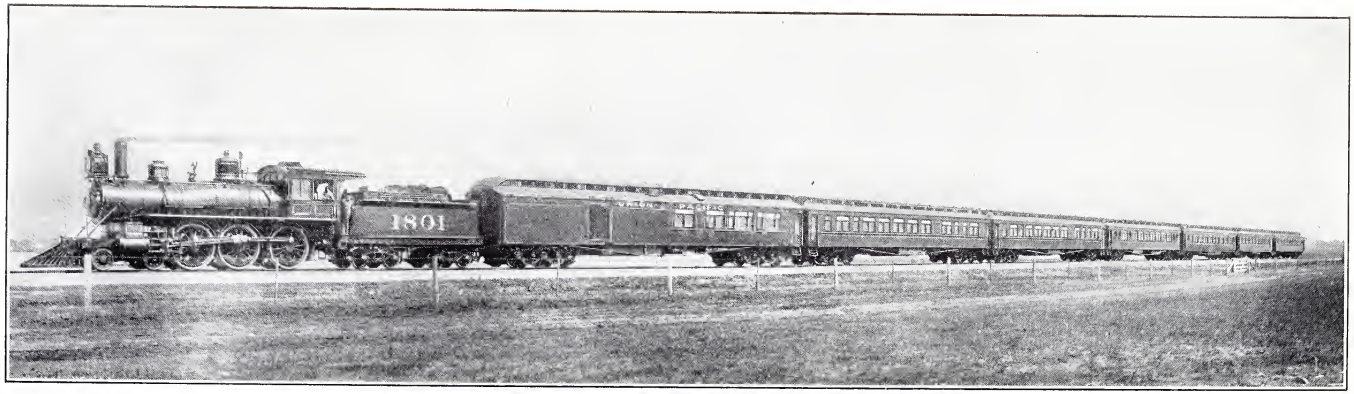
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Opera Company in "The Bohemian Girl," in 1863. A stock company was organized in the house in 1869, led by McKee Rankin and Kate Fletcher. Bryan Hall occupied the present site of the Grand Opera House, and was erected in 1860. The late R. M. Hooley secured this in 1870, and transformed it into Hooley's Opera House, opening it January 2d with Hooley's Minstrels. Mrs. Lander, in "Elizabeth," was booked to play at this house the week it was swept away by the big fire.

The famous Crosby Opera House, located on Washington Street, between State and Dearborn, was opened April 20, 1865, by Grau's Italian Opera Company, in "Il Trovatore," with Clara Louise Kellogg as prima donna. This opera house cost $600,000, was the finest structure in the West, fairly outrivaling the famous Pikes' Opera House of Cincinnati. It had an art gallery, and old-timers described it as a structure that might fairly rival the Grand Opera House of Paris. It was refitted in 1871 at a large expense, and was to have been reopened by the Theodore Thomas Orchestra the night the great fire swept it out of existence. The sensational disposition of the opera house by a lottery, when the Crosby fortunes were on the wane, is a somewhat mysterious story, for Crosby raffled it off, selling hundreds of tickets at $5, $10, and $20 apiece. The lucky man was an old miller near Quincy, named Lee, and Crosby and his friends rode furiously across country after the drawing, and bought out the old man's interest for a song. Another story to the effect that Lee assumed control of the opera house and lost every cent he had through dissipation is discredited by old settlers.

Aiken's Theatre, afterward the Dearborn Theatre, 115-117 Dearborn Street, opened January 18, 1869, with a stock company, in "Cyril's Success." It was transformed into the Dearborn a few months later, occupied by the Emerson, Allen, and Manning Minstrels. The German Opera, Charles Wyndham, and other notable attractions peopled the stage of this house. The first Academy of Music, 124 Washington Street, opened December 1, 1863, with the Arlington and Kelly Minstrels, and was followed by the Campbell Castle English Opera Company. The first Olympic Theatre, corner of Clark and Monroe streets, was opened July 13, 1868, by Arlington's Minstrels.

The Globe Theatre, on Desplaines Street, now known as the Lyceum, was opened November 21, 1870, by a stock company in "The Rivals." It was the only theatre surviving the great fire of 1871, and a number of the current stars of that time appeared on its stage, including Charles Wyndham, Theodore Wachtel, the



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famous German tenor; and the Lydia Thompson Company, that created a sensation the year before at the Crosby Opera House, also appeared here.

The Wyndham Comedy Company opened Standard Hall, Michigan Avenue and Thirteenth Street, as a theatre a few weeks after the first fire. The first theatre, however, erected after the big fire was the Academy of Music, on Halsted Street, near Madison. It opened January 10, 1872, with "Ours." Lucille Western, Aimee, John McCullough, Frank Chanfrau, Edwin Adams, Rosina Vokes, and other notables, who have since joined the great majority, appeared on this stage. The house was destroyed by fire in 1878; was rebuilt and burned out in 1880, when it was promptly rebuilt. Aiken's Theatre, the third of the name, was on the northwest corner of Wabash Avenue and Congress Street. It was opened October 9, 1872, the anniversary of the big fire, with the Theodore Thomas Orchestra as the attraction. It burned in the second big fire, July 14, 1874, and was not rebuilt.

THE PARLOR HOME OF COMEDY.

Hooley's Theatre was opened October 17, 1872, with the Abbott-Kiralfy Company, and was the second theatre in line after the great conflagration. In 1876 it was briefly known as Haverly's, but subsequently it was restored to its founder, R. M. Hooley, who conducted it up to the time of his death in September, 1893. May 1, 1898, the house passed from the control of the Hooley estate to Harry J. Powers, who secured Messrs. Wilson and Marshall to reconstruct the house that is now known as Powers' Theatre. It was opened August 22, 1898, with Clyde Fitch's play, "The Moth and the Flame," and is one of the most beautiful theatres in America. In fact, this theatre and The Illinois, with their allied interests, may be counted as unequaled in the United States, and the class of attractions they present are positively of the best.

The walls of the old Post Office building, left standing as a memorial of the great fire, were utilized to shelter a theatre called the Adelphi. It was built by Mr. W. W. Cole, of circus fame, who associated with him Leonard Grover in its management. It was in the box office of this house that Will J. Davis began his theatrical career. In 1878 it was reconstructed by J. H. Haverly, who succeeded to the lease, and who afterward became noted as a manager of theatres from New York to San Francisco, no less than twenty-two houses being under his management at one time. The house continued under his management two years.

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The Columbia Theatre, known for four years as Haverly's Theatre, was opened in the fall of 1880, with Robson and Crane in "The Comedy of Errors." In 1885 the name was changed to the Columbia by Miss Ellen Terry. The house was then owned by C. H. McConnell, who made Mr. Davis his manager. Mr. McConnell disposed of the theatre, and a succession of managements followed, much to the detriment of the property, when in 1890 it was leased by Messrs. Hayman and Davis, and advanced immediately to the front rank of theatrical enterprises, so continuing until its destruction by fire March 30, 1900.

The Grand Opera House, formerly the "Coliseum" and "Hamlin's" Theatre, was opened September, 1880, with "A Child of the State." It has since continued under the management of the Hamlins.

The Bijou Theatre, formerly the Standard, was opened December 31, 1883, in opposition to the Halsted Street Opera House, and on same street. It was an attractive theatre, and was opened by Fay Templeton in "Girofle-Girofla."

The first fireproof theatre in this city was the Chicago Opera House, opened August 18, 1885, with David Henderson as manager. It continued for a decade as the most famous producing house of spectacle in America. December 22, 1895, Kohl and Castle secured the lease of the house, and have since given it over to high-class vaudeville.

The Clark Street Theatre, occupying the site of the old McCormick Hall, was opened October 27, 1889, by H. R. Jacobs, with "Said Pasha," by the California Opera Company, as the attraction.

The Criterion Theatre, erected in 1883 by the late A. A. Munger for Charles Engel, the first theatre of importance in the northwestern part of the city, was erected on Sedgwick Street in opposition to the old National Theatre. This theatre has one of the largest stages of any house in the city, but during the past ten years of its life has had a rather unenviable and checkered career. Recently it passed into the hands of Lincoln J. Carter, who has succeeded in making it financially successful.

The Lincoln Theatre, formerly the Windsor, located on Clark Street, near Division, was opened September 26, 1886, by the Redmond-Barry Company, in "A Cure for the Blues." It burned in 1889, but was rebuilt and opened in October of the same year. In August 26, 1894, it was leased to James S. Hutton, who changed it to the Lincoln Theatre, the opening attraction being Gustave Frohman's Company in "The Charity Ball." The house was burned again in December, 1898, and has not been rebuilt.

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The Olympic Theatre, formerly New Chicago, was erected upon the site of the old Kingsbury Hall, Clark Street, and was opened under the management of James H. McVicker in August, 1875, with a play called "Apple Blossoms," with a company enlisting Lewis James, Helen Tracy, and Ada Gilman. Ten years later the house was leased by Kohl and Middleton, who opened it with Laura Dainty, in "A Mountain Pink." In 1896 the house was completely rebuilt, and remains under the management of Kohl and Castle.

Myers' Opera House, in the Chapin and Gore building, Monroe Street, was opened early in 1872, and continued as the home of minstrelsy for a number of years. Col. J. H. Wood vainly endeavored to reëstablish his museum here.

The Haymarket Theatre, one of the most complete of modern structures, was built for and opened under the management of Will J. Davis, December 24, 1887, with the late Thomas W. Keene in "Richard III." The house prospered under his management for almost a decade, when Mr. Davis disposed of his lease to Kohl and Castle, who have given it over to vaudeville.

The Alhambra, located on State Street and Archer Avenue, was opened September 1, 1890, by the Emma Juch English Opera Company in "Faust." It was managed by H. R. Jacobs until '97, and has had a new manager every year since that time.

Havlin's Theatre, formerly Baker's, was opened in 1885 in Wabash Avenue near Nineteenth, with E. E. Rice's "Pearl of Pekin." The name was changed to Havlin's Theatre in 1889, and John A. Havlin came into the management. This house has been out of commission for several years, and is at present the only vacant theatre in the city.

Hopkins' Theatre, formerly the People's (in State Street), was opened October 1, 1884, with R. A. Graham in "Wanted—a Partner." In 1894 it was leased by the Tri-State Amusement Company, and in 1898, four years later, passed under the management of John D. Hopkins, who has since conducted it as a continuous stock company. This theatre was a pioneer in the continuous entertainment.

The Schiller Theatre, now Dearborn, was built by the German Opera House Company and opened October 17, 1892, by Charles Frohman's Company in "Gloriana." It is also a fireproof structure with an eighteen-story tower, and has since its dedication had no less than nine managers, but is at present a very successful theatrical institution.

The Great Northern Theatre, on Jackson Boulevard near Dearborn Street, was opened November 9, 1896, under the manage-

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ment of A. M. Palmer, with Henry Miller in "Heartsease." Two years ago this house was leased to E. D. Stair, and has since been managed by D. E. Russell with great success.

The Studebaker, occupying the lower portion of the Fine Arts Building on the Lake Front, was dedicated as a theatre two years ago, and its stage has since been given over almost entirely to opera at popular prices by the Castle Square Opera Company.

The Auditorium, the largest building of its class in the United States, was dedicated December 9, 1889, with a musical program, headed by Adelina Patti. The following evening the Abbey and Grau Company opened a season of grand opera. This great building has a seating capacity for 4,170 people and the most perfect hydraulic stage in the world. The Auditorium is managed by Milward Adams. During the World's Fair year this stage was given over to the spectacle "America," which was said to have drawn in the aggregate nearly a million dollars.

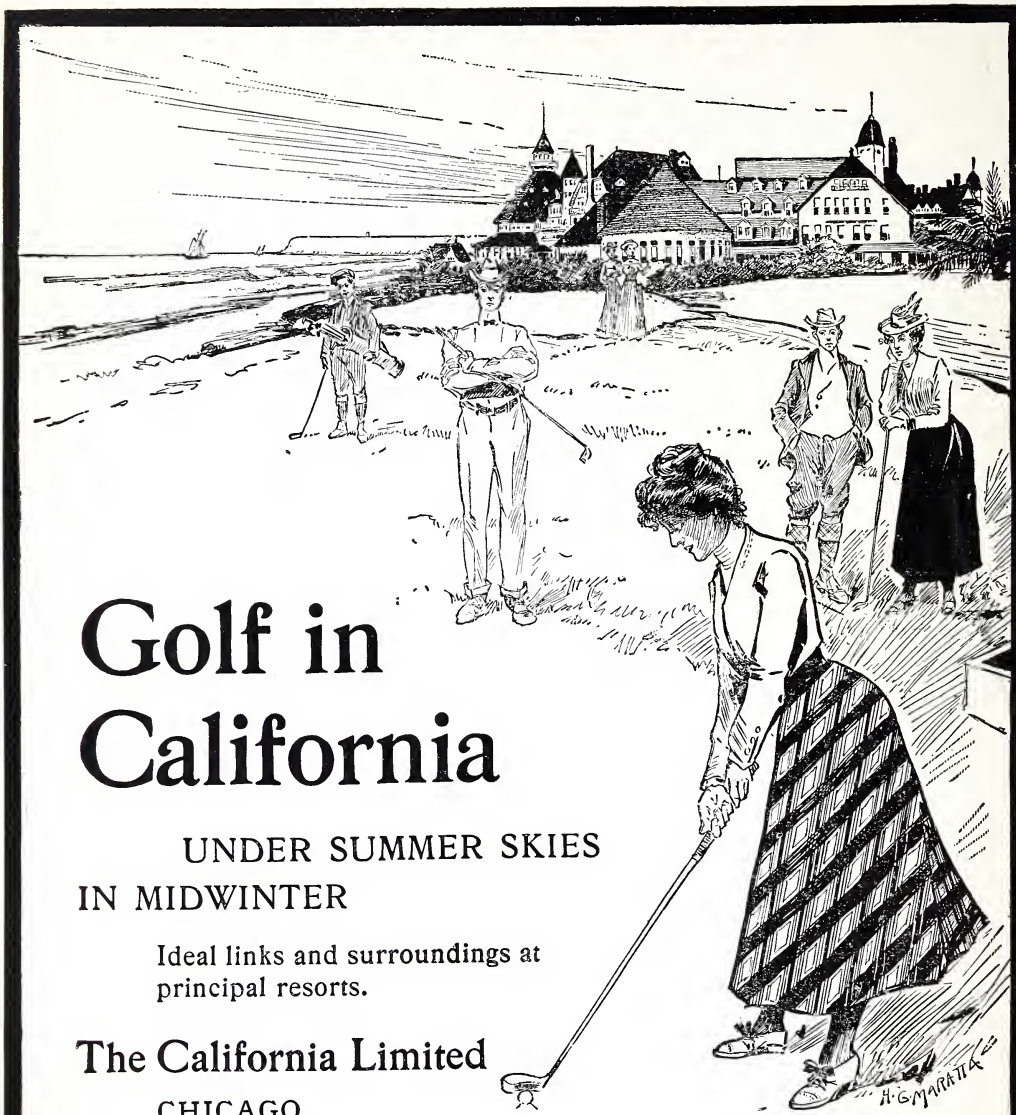
Two very large theatres, seldom listed among the Chicago houses, are the People's Institute on the West Side (Van Buren and Leavitt streets), and the quaint Hebrew theatre on Jefferson Street, near Maxwell.

The three minor theatres of the city, confining themselves exclusively to burlesque, are Sam Jack's Opera House, originally constructed for J. H. Haverly's Minstrels; the Hurtig and Seamon Music Hall, formerly known as the Gaiety; and the Trocadero Theatre on State Street. The first named house has been in operation fifteen years, and the others are of a comparatively recent period. Steinway Hall is now being reconstructed as a house for minstrelsy.

Two of the most notable of outlying theatres are the fine opera house in Englewood known as the Marlowe Theatre, and the Arcade Theatre of Pullman.

AMONG THE FORGOTTEN.

Among the theatres that have been forgotten, yet have enjoyed a very active and sometime prosperous existence, may be recalled the old National Theatre, located on Clybourn Avenue, near Division Street. About fifteen years ago this house employed a stock company and enjoyed considerable prosperity for four or five seasons. Some of the actors that formed this company have since attained considerable distinction in the world of the stage, but strangely neglect to mention the old school of their training during their visits to this city. For a long time the North Side Turners'



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Hall, on North Clark Street, was the home of the German stock company; at an earlier period Mueller's Hall, on North Avenue, enjoyed this distinction. The home of the Bohemian Company on the West Side was the Twelfth Street Turner Hall. The colored stock company used to give their dramatic displays on the stage of the Twenty-second Street Opera House. On West Madison Street there were no less than three theatres that enjoyed prosperity in the past, viz.: The Madison Street Opera House, the Princess Opera House, and Grenier's Garden Theatre. The two last named houses now serve as quarters for the Salvation Army and the Salvation Army Volunteers. Close to the center of the city, and opposite the Haymarket, was the Empire Theatre that was burned out a few years ago, and has never been restored. Two theatres that were not even mentioned in the archives are the old Metropolitan Hall, on La Salle and Randolph, and Harrigan and Hart's variety theatre that was located on Monroe Street, near Clark.

Few people recall the little old Adelphi Theater on Canal Street. It still exists, but has not been occupied for a decade. An exceedingly active factor up to within a few years ago was the Halsted Street Opera House, on Halsted Street near Congress. It enjoyed a long and flourishing career. In the basement of this theatre for a long time existed the most extensive clearing house for pirated plays that could be found in this country. For a small cash consideration conscienceless speculators could secure copies of the latest copyrighted plays with all the fine printing surreptitiously acquired, for their exploitation. This dingy basement has probably caused enterprising managers more trouble and annoyance than any play bureau that ever existed in America.

* * *

Such are the abstracts and brief chronicle of the Chicago theatres. Space unfortunately will not allow a recapitulation of the notable productions, dramatic and operatic, or of the long runs that have been given upon the Chicago stage. Nor will it permit consideration of this city as one of the greatest musical centers in this country.

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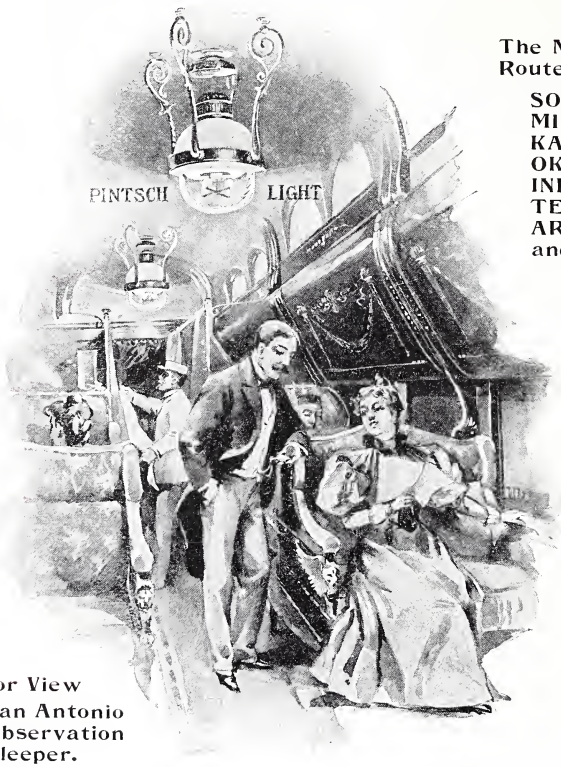
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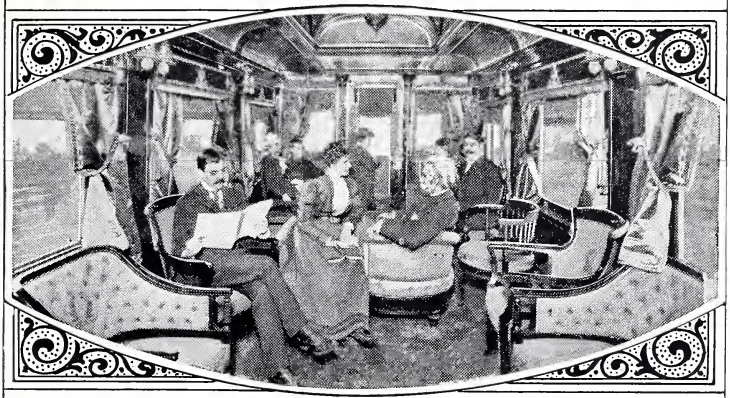
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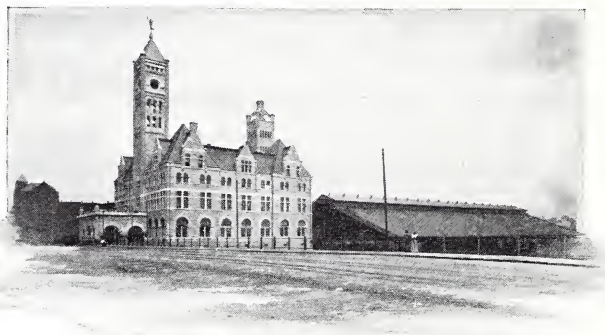
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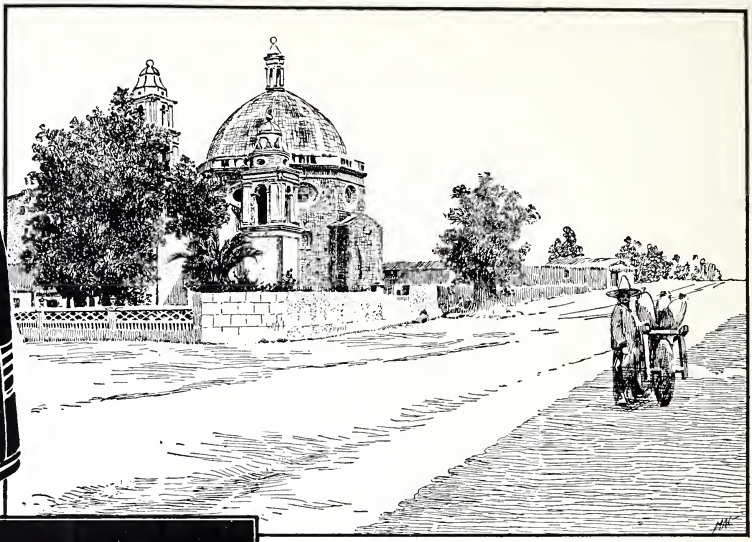
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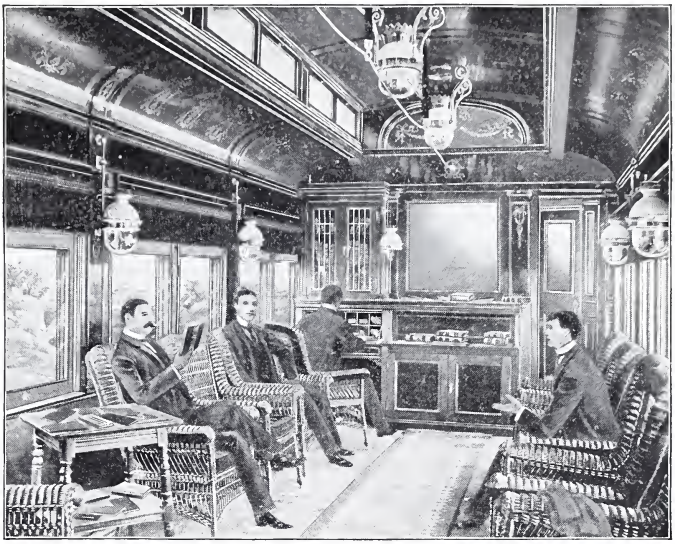
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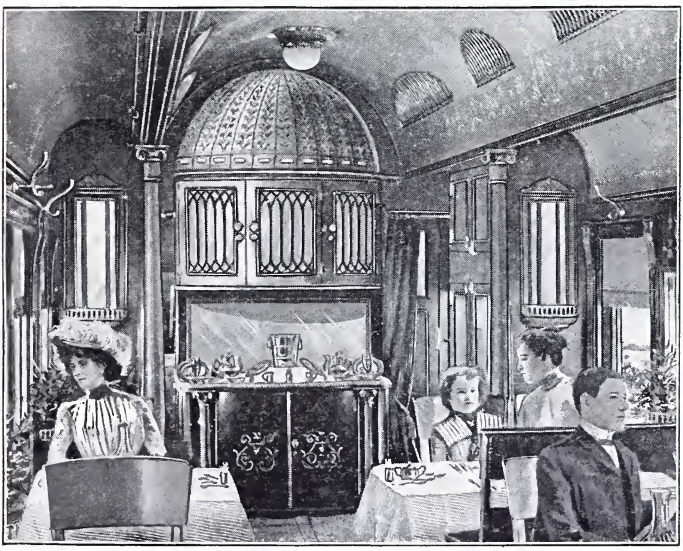
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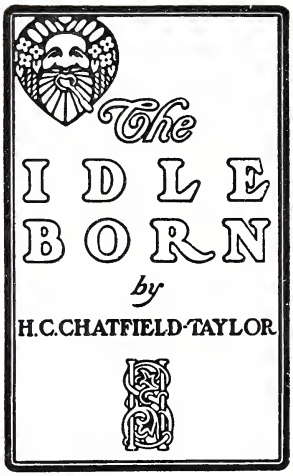
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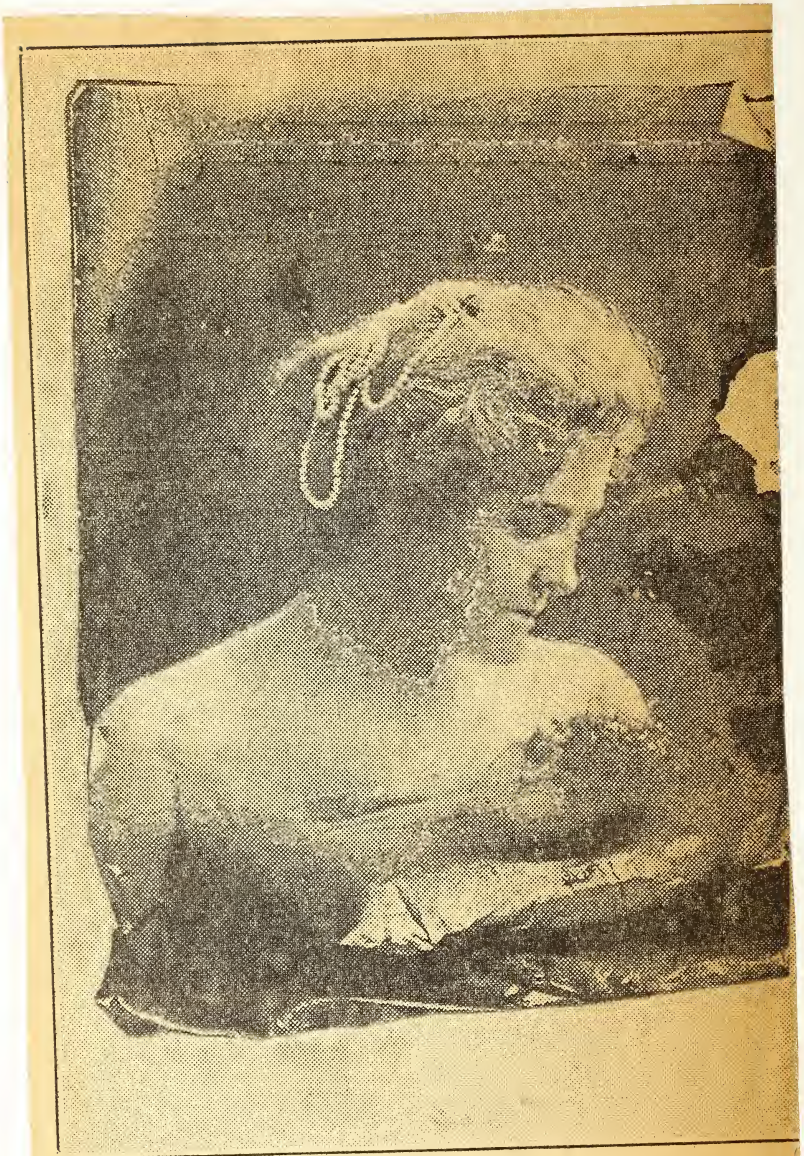
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Copies of photographs of Jesse Bartlett (left) and Lillian Russell removed from the cornerstone of the Illinois



Theater which is being leveled to make way for a parking lot.

International News Photos by Herald and Examiner.

81-362

CORNERSTONE OPENED

Illinois Theater Yields Relics

CHICAGO HERALD AND EXAMINER...
WED. MARCH 11 - 1936.

Old Names and Old Whisky

Ghosts of Theater Flee Lead Box

TOAST TO PAST

Like genii liberated from confinement, mighty ghosts of Chicago's great stage history of the part sprang into life yesterday, when the lead cornerstone box which for thirty-six years has been sealed in stone at the base of the Illinois Theater was opened at last.

The old theater at 61 E. Jackson blvd. is being leveled to make way for a parking lot, but as three of the original group of nine who were present when the cornerstone was laid reassembled in the Union League Club and opened the box, the echoes of the past were insistent.

Once again the ghostly muffled tread of Sir Henry Irving and Ellen Terry sounded across the boards. A frail evocation of the startling beauty of Lillian Russell came across the departed years. The fine bell of the "divine" Sarah Bernhardt's voice rang in the stillness.

BOURBON—48 YEARS OLD!

From among the inscribed pictures of these stars who played the theater in bygone times Will J. Davis Jr., of Crown Point, Ind., whose father was the original owner of the theater, lifted a forty-eight-year-old bottle of "Wellington Hotel" bourbon.

Davis poised a glass of the fragrant liquor. In his hand was a picture of his mother, Jessie Bartlett, taken from the box. He said:

"If my governor were here, he would give just one toast: Here's to those who are gone, and to Chicago, God bless her."

THREE SURVIVORS DRINK.

Beside him, drinking the toast, were Ben H. Marshall, architect of the theater; Harry J. Powers, its first manager, and Mrs. Powers, the only survivors of the group that sealed up the cornerstone on May 22, 1900.

The years had claimed Davis Sr. and Gus Frohman, whose brother, Charles J. Frohman, had presented the great Julia Marlowe in "Barbara Frietchie," the first play produced in the new theater, on October 15, 1900. The others were gone, too—Charles Geary, ticket-taker; Sam Nixon, Pittsburgh theater owner; Harry Summers, business manager, and the veteran stage door guard, who turned away the young bucks of thirty years ago, but whose name is now lost.

MARLOWE AND RUSSELL.

Among the papers in the box were an autographed photograph of Lillian Russell, inscribed "Prosperity and good luck," and of Miss Marlowe, greatest Shakespearean actress of her time.

Bernhardt and Billie Burke, Ada Rehan, Otis Skinner, Maude Adams and Anna Held—great names, those—were familiar to the old theater, but as Powers sadly said:

"This is not a celebration, and yet not a wake. It is the epilogue of the golden era in the legitimate theater in Chicago. We shall not see the like again."



Left to right: W... erstone of the old
Powers, Mrs. Po... d thirty-six years
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Chicago, Illinois Theatre

Illinois Theatre Souvenir Programme

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